

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 L-03 SS-15 NSC-05 SP-02 USIA-06
PRS-01 CPR-01 INR-07 NSAE-00 /053 W
-----008949 131933Z /47

P R 131615Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE PRIORITY 6653
INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD
DIA WASHDC
DOD WASHDC
CIA WASHDC

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FOR EUR/SOV TRAVEL

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: OTRA, US, UR, CSCE
SUBJECT: 1966 TRAVEL REGULATIONS REPLACED

REF: MOSCOW 0563

SUMMARY: THE NEW 1978 TRAVEL REGULATIONS CHANGE TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS ON DIPLOMATS FOR NEARLY EVERY REPUBLIC OF THE USSR. PARA ONE BRIEFLY HIGHLIGHTS THE CHANGES; PARAS 2-15 DESCRIBE THEM IN DETAIL; PARA 16 OFFERS THE EMBASSY'S ANALYSIS OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CHANGES. END SUMMARY.

1. HIGHLIGHTS: ON THE NEGATIVE SIDE:

-- THE CHINESE BORDER REGION HAS BEEN OFFICIALLY CLOSED (BIROBIDZHAN, AMURSKAYA OBLAST', CHITSKAYA OBLAST', VOSTOCHNOKAZAKHSTANSKAYA OBLAST').

-- SMALL AREAS NEAR CHERKASSY (CHIGIRIN RAYON), IN
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KIRGHIZIA (ALAYSKIY AND SOVYETSKIY RAYONS) AND NEAR THE AMERICAN DACHA (RESEVOIR 2 KM. RADIUS CLOSED AREAS) WERE ALL CLOSED FOR THE FIRST TIME.

ON THE POSITIVE SIDE:

-- ALL OTHER CLOSED AREAS IN SIBERIA WERE OPENED UP,

THOUGH THERE WAS NO OPENING OF SIGNIFICANT SIBERIAN CITIES.

-- MAGNITOGORSK AND PARTS OF PERM OBLAST WERE OPENED IN THE URALS.

-- VAST TRACTS OF VIRTUALLY EMPTY LAND WERE OPENED IN CENTRAL ASIA.

-- SMALL AREAS WERE OPENED UP IN S. EUROPEAN RUSSIA (VOLGOGRAD EAST BANK, KABARDINO-BALKARSKAYA ASSR, CHERNOVITSKAYA OBLAST, LUTSK, CITIES AROUND TARNOPOLO).

-- FOURTEEN AREAS IN MOSCOW OBLAST WERE OPENED (CMITROV, SERPUKHOV, OREKHOVA-ZYUEVO, MOZHAISK, PUSHCHINO, PRYOKSKO-TERRASNIY STATE RESERVE, VOLOKOLAMSK, MURANOVO, AND THE RAYONS OF KRASNOGORSKIY, LENINSKIY, SEREBRYANO-PRUDSKIY, ZARAISKIY, OZERSKIY AND KASHIRSKIY).

-- ELEVEN CITIES HAVE BEEN OPENED IN THE BALTIC REPUBLICS (KAUNAS, DRUSKININKIY, TRAKAI, PRAVENAY, SAULKRasti, SIGULDA, OGRE, SALASPILS, AKADMGORODOK, NARVA AND KOKHTLA-YARVE).

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-- PART OF PSKOV OBLAST IS OPEN AS ARE FIVE CITIES IN THE LENINGRAD AREA (VYBORG, LOMONOSOV, VALDAY, STARAYA RUSSA, KRESTSY).

-- CLOSED AREAS ON THE SOUTHERN EDGES OF THE WHITE SEA HAVE BEEN EITHER ELIMINATED OR SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCED.

A SUMMARY OF THE CHANGES, BY REGIONS, FOLLOWS.

2. BORDER ZONES: THE 25 KM. BORDER ZONES REMAIN THE SAME.

3. RSFSR: FAR EAST, URALS, EUROPE

-- CHUKOTSKIY NATIONAL OKRUG - FORMERLY THE ENTIRE REGION EAST OF THE RIVERS AMGUEMA, B. OSINOVKA, BELAYA AND MAYN WAS OFF LIMITS. NOW, ONLY A 25 KM.-WIDE COASTAL STRIP IS CLOSED, AND THE INTERIOR REGIONS ARE FREE FOR TRAVEL.

-- KHABAROVSKIY KRAY: BIROBIDZHAN IS CLOSED.

-- AMURSKAYA AND CHITINSKAYA OBLAST'S: THESE AREAS, LONG CLOSED FOR "ROTN" (74 MOSCOW 2533), ARE OFFICIALLY CLOSED.

-- NOVGORODSKAYA OBLAST': THE CITIES OF VALDAY, STARAYA RUSSA AND THE SETTLEMENT OF KRESTSY ARE OPEN.

-- ARKHANGELSKOYE OBLAST': THE LESHUKONSKIY REGION IS OPEN. ONLY THE PRIMORSKY RAYON AND A 50 KM. STRIP SLONG THE ARKHANGELSK-KONOSHA RR ARE CLOSED. THE SOLOVETSKY ISLANDS ARE STILL CLOSED.

-- PERMSKAYA OBLAST': THE KOMI-PERMYATSKIY NATIONAL OKRUG IS OPEN, AS IS THE TOWN OF BEREZHNIKI LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND THE RAIL LINE TO IT THROUGH PERM.

-- CHELYABINSK OBLAST': THE CITH OF MAGNITORGORSK IS OPEN, BUT ACCESSIBLE ONLY BY AIR.

-- VOLGOGRADSKAYA OBLAST': A SMALL REGION ACROSS THE RIVER FROM VOLGOGRAD HAS BEEN OPENED (VOLZHSKIY-SREDNYAYA AKHTUBA - SOUTHERN TIP OF SARPINSKIY ISLAND).

-- LENINGRADSKAYA OBLAST': VYBORG AND LOMONOSOV HAVE BEEN OPENED. THE LENINGRAD-TALLIN, AND VYBORG-BRUSNICHNOYE-ISKROVKA-TSVETOCHNOYE-ILISTOYE-PYALLY AUTO ROUTES ARE OPEN.

4. RSFSR: MOSKOVSKAYA OBLAST'

-- THE ENTIRE CITY OF MOSCOW IS OPEN, AS BEFORE. DMITROV, SERPUKHOV, OREKHOVO-ZYUEVO, MOZHAISK, PUSHCHINO, PRYOKSKO-TERRASNIY STATE RESERVE, VOLOKOLAMSK (VIA TERYAYEVO AND DUBOSEKOVO CROSSING POINT) AND MURANOVO (PUSHKINSKY RAYON) ARE OPEN. THE KRASNOGORSKIY, LENINSKIY, SEREBRYANO-PRUDSKIY, ZARAISKY, OZERSKIY AND KASHIRSKIY RAYONS HAVE ALL BEEN OPENED.

-- ODINTSOVSKIY RAYON SW OF THE MINSK HIGHWAY UP THROUGH GOLITSYNO IS OPEN. THIS MEANS PEREDELKINO IS ALSO AT LONG LAST FORMALLY RECOGNIZED AS BEING OPEN.

-- MYTISHCHINSKY AND PUSHKINSKY RAYONS HAVE MORE AREAS OPEN TO TRAVEL, THOUGH THE CLOSED AREAS TWO KILOMETERS IN RADIUS AROUND THE PESTOVSKOYE, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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UCHINSKOYE, AND PYALOVSKOYE RESEVOIRS CLOSES LAND FORMERLY OPEN TO TRAVEL AND CLOSE TO THE AMERICAN DACHA. KALININGRAD IS STILL CLOSED.

-- NEW TRANSIT ROADS HAVE BEEN OPENED UP IN ORDER TO GET TO THE NEWLY-OPENED AREAS. MURANOVO: THE YAROSLAVSKOYE HIGHWAY VIA RAKHMANOV. SERPUKHOV, PUSHCHINO AND THE PRIJKO-TERRASNIY STATE RESERVE: THE SIMFEROPOLSKOYE HIGHWAY VIA DANKI. OREKHOVO-ZUYEVO: THE GORKOVSKOYE HIGHWAY VIA MALAYA DUBNA. VOLKOLAMSK: THE VOLOKOLAMSK HIGHWAY. MOZHAYSKE: MINSK HIGHWAY-MOZHAYSKOYE HIGHWAY. KASHINSKIY, OZERSKIY, ZARAYSKIY AND SEREBRYANO-PRUDSKIY RAYONS: KASHINSKOYE HIGHWAY. DUBNA: NOW ACCESSIBLE VIA THE MOSCOW CANAL.

5. RSFSR: OTHER AREAS

-- KEM' (KARELIA SSR), NOVIL'SK, DUDINKA, DIKSON AND KHATANGA (ALL TAYMYRSKIY NATIONAL'NIY OKRUG) HAVE BEEN MADE CLOSED CITIES. THE LARGE CLOSED AREA WHICH ONCE SURROUNDED NOVIL'SK, DUDINKA AND DIKSON IS OPEN. NO MENTION IS MADE OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS WHICH WERE CLOSED BY THE DIPLOMATIC NOTE OF JULY 22, 1966: BURYATSKAYA SSR (REGION 50 KM. WIDE LYING ALONG LAKE BAIKAL IN THE SECTOR NIZHNA-ANGARSK-BAGRUZIN); NOVAYA SIBIR ISLAND; YAKUTSKAYA ASSR (THE REGION BOUNDED BY THE RIBERS TUMARA, DYANSKHA AND LENA); BARABINSKY AND KUYBYSHEVSKY REGIONS OF THE NOVOSIBIRSK OBLAST'; KARELSKAYA ASSR (THE REGIONS WITHIN THE BOUNDRIES OF KEM', ANDRONOVA GORA, AND KOCHOMA AS WELL AS TO THE SE OF THE RR LINE OVER THE SECTOR PETROZAVODSK-SVIR); PSKOVSKAYA OBLAST' (THE REGION TO THE NORTH OF THE RR LINE-PSKOV-PECHORY; YAMALO-NENETSKY NATIONAL OKRUG (REGION BETWEEN THE RIVERS NYDA, NADYM, AND TANLOVA); AND KABARDINO- LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BALKARSKAYA ASSR. SINCE THE 1978 NOTE INVALIDATES THE 1966 RESTRICTIONS, THESE HAVE ALL PRESUMABLY BECOME OPEN AREAS.

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 L-03 SS-15 NSC-05 SP-02 USIA-06

PRS-01 CPR-01 INR-07 NSAE-00 /053 W

-----009073 131932Z /47

P R 131615Z JAN 78

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6654

INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

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6. ESTONSKAYA SSR

-- KOKHTLA-YARVE AND NARVA ARE OPEN. CAR TRIPS CAN BE MADE TALLIN-NARVA-LENINGRAD PROVIDED NO OVERNIGHT STOPS ARE MADE EN ROUTE. TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS ARE ALSO MORE LIBERAL, ALLOWING: TALLIN-LENINGRAD ITINERARIES PASSING THROUGH NARVA; INTOURIST STOPS IN PAYDE AND PYARNU; AGRICULTURAL VISITS IN VILYENDI, YYGEVA, PAYDE, PYARNU AND TARTU RAYONS; OVERNIGHTING IN VILYANDI AND PYARNU; AND FLIGHTS FROM TALLIN VIA AEROFLOT TO MOSCOW, LENINGRAD, RIGA AND BACK.

7. LATVIYSKAYA SSR

-- OGRE, SIGULDA AND SAULKRASTY ARE OPEN CITIES, BUT IT IS NOT CLEAR WHETHER ONE CAN ONLY MAKE DAY-TRIPS FROM RIGA OR SPEND THE NIGHT AS WELL. OGRE MAY BE REACHED BY USING THE RIGA-MOSCOW RR LINE OR BY INTOURIST CAR FROM RIGA. INTOURIST AUTO-TRANSPORT ALSO GOES TO SALASPILS, INCLUDING AKADEM- LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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GORODOK AND THE SALASPILS MEMORIAL COMPLEX, AND IKSHKILE. SIGULDA MAY BE REACHED USING THE RIGA-LENINGRAD RR LINE, OR BY USING INTOURIST

AUTOTRANSPORT VIA THE RIGA-PSKOV ROAD OR THE RIGA-INCHUKALIS-RAGANA-TURAIDA ROAD WITH A STOP NEAR THE "SENITE" RESTAURANT. SAULKRASTY MAY BE REACHED BY THE RIGA-ALAYA RR LINE WITH THE RIGHT TO STOP AT ALL STATIONS, OR BY INTOURIST AUTOTRANSPORT VIA THE RIGA-TALLIN HIGHWAY.

8. LITOVS KAYA SSR

-- DRUSKININKAY AND KAUNAS ARE NOW OPEN CITIES. DRUSKININKAY CAN BE REACHED BY RAIL OR "INTOURIST" AUTOTRANSPORT FROM VILNIUS VIA PIRCHUPIS. KAUNAS CAN BE REACHED ONLY BY AN "INTOURIST" TOUR, WHICH FIRST STOPS FOR A DAY IN TRAKAY AND PRAVENAY. KAUNAS MAY BE VISITED ONLY BY "TOURISTS" AND PERSONS CONNECTED WITH WHO. THE RAIL LINE GRODNO-VILNIUS-LENINGRAD MAY NOW BE USED FOR TRANSIT.

9. UKRAINS KAYA SSR

-- IN THE TERNOPOL'SKAYA OLBAST' CERTAIN CITIES SURROUNDING TERNOPOL' (ZBOROV, ZBARAZH, TEREBOVLYA, BEREZHANY AND PODVOLOCHISK) ARE OPEN AND REACHABLE BY INTOURIST AUTOTRANSPORT. THE CHERNOVITSKAYA OBLAST' IS OPEN. THE CHIGIRINSKIY RAYON OF CHERKASSY OBLAST' IS CLOSED. THE CITY OF LUTSK IS OPEN. THE BREST-KOVEL-LUTSK-RUVNO TRANSIT ROUTE IS NO LONGER RESTRICTED TO INTOURIST AUTOTRANSPORT ONLY.

10. ARMYANS KAYA, GRUZINS KAYA AND AZERBAYDZHANS KAYA LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SSR'S:

-- NO CHANGE

11. KAZAKHS KAYA SSR

-- THE KYZL-ORDINS KAYA OBLAST' SOUTH OF THE SYR-DARYA RIVER IS OPEN. KARAGANDINS KAYA OBLAST' IS RENAMED DZHEZKAZGANS KAYA OBLAST', AND IS STILL CLOSED. VOSTOCHONOKAZAKHSTANS KAYA OBLAST' HAS BEEN CLOSED. MANGYSHLAKSYAKA OBLAST', WITH THE EXCEPTION OF SHEVCHENKO, IS OPEN.

12. TADZHIKSKAYA SSR

-- NO CHANGE

13. KIRGIZSKAYA SSR

-- THE ALAYSKIY AND SOVYETSKIY RAYONS OF OSHSKAYA OBLAST' HAVE BEEN CLOSED.

14. UZBEKSKAYA SSR

-- ALL OF KARAKALPAKSAYA ASSR HAS BEEN OPENED, EXCEPT FOR ALL OF MUINAKSKIY RYON AND KUNGRADSKIY RAYON NE OF THE KUNGRAD-KARAKALPAKIYA RR (I.E., THE S. BANK OF THE ARAL)

15. TURKMENSKAYA SSR

-- ONLY KRASNOVODSK REMAINS CLOSED (NOT COUNTING THE 25 KM. BORDER ZONE). HOWEVER, TRAVEL TO ASHKHABAD, MARY, CHARDZHOV AND TASHAUZ MAY ONLY BE MADE BY AIR.

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16. COMMENT: THE NEW TRAVEL REGULATIONS REPRESENT A LIMITED LIBERALIZATION OF OFFICIAL TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS. WHILE THE CHINESE BORDER REGIONS, INCLUDING BIROBIDZHAN, ARE NOW OFFICIALLY CLOSED, OTHER AREAS WHICH HAVE BEEN OPENED UP MORE THAN COUNTER BALANCE, BOTH IN NUMBERS AND IN LAND AREA, THE NEWLY-CLOSED REGIONS. ADMITTEDLY, MOST OF THE REGIONS OPENED UP IN SIBERIA AND CENTRAL ASIA ARE SIMPLY EMPTY SPACE. MOREOVER, SOME OF THE CITIES "OPENED" ARE ACCESSIBLE ONLY THROUGH SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS (SUCH AS KAUNAS). ALSO DAO FEELS THAT THE NEW AREAS WHICH HAVE BEEN OPENED UP OFFERS FEW PROSPECTS FOR INCREASED MILITARY OBSERVATIONS. HOWEVER, THE SMALL AREAS OPENED UP IN THE URAL REGION, THE MORE NUMEROUS AREAS OPENED IN THE BALTIC, LENINGRAD AND WEST UKRAINE REGIONS, AND THE NEW AREAS OPENED UP IN MOSCOW OBLAST' GIVE OTHER EMBASSY OFFICERS SIGNIFICANT NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRAVEL AND USEFUL OBSERVATION. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN TO WHAT DEGREE THE SOVIETS WILL HONOR THE LETTER OF THEIR NEW REGULATIONS, AND TO WHAT EXTENT ALLEGEDLY OPEN AREAS BECOME DE FACTO INACCESSIBLE. IN ANY CASE, IT IS CERTAIN THAT THE SOVIETS WILL NOT TARRY IN MAKING THEIR OWN PITCH FOR A CORRESPONDING LIBERALIZATION OF TRAVEL REGULATIONS ON OUR SIDE. WE RECOMMEND THAT DEPARTMENT MAKE COMPARABLE CHANGES IN OUR RESTRICTIONS ON SOVIET TRAVEL IN U.S., COUPLED WITH RENEWAL OF OFFER RECIPROCALLY TO REDUCE FURTHER, OR ELIMINATE ALTOGETHER, REMAINING TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MOSCOW00611
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780020-0994
Format: TEL
From: MOSCOW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780165/aaaacddw.tel
Line Count: 386
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 7424fce3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 8
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 MOSCOW 563
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3777904
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: 1966 TRAVEL REGULATIONS REPLACED
TAGS: OTRA, US, UR, CSCE
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/7424fce3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014